

SECRET

8 October 1947

25X1
T.G.

25X1

FROM : Information Control, OSO
COUNTRY : Albania
SUBJECT : Albanian Air Force

25X1

1. The Commander of the Albanian Naval Air Force is Soviet Major General Bek Baklanov whose HQ is at North five kilometers north-west of Valona. General Baklanov's HQs has only four Albanian officers (one major and three subordinates), the others being Russians or Yugoslavs.

2. The Albanian Naval Air Force, created by the Soviets, is not of any importance in respect to strength, but could have a considerable nuisance value on account of the excellent selection of pilots.

3. In the second half of July 1947, five hydroplanes of an old Soviet type arrived by the Burgas air route at the Hydroplane "Field" Base on Ligen'i Butrintit (Lake Vivari), the installation of which was completed in May 1947. Two of these planes were fighters of the "MI-4" type (slightly modernized and equipped with four instead of two MGs); two were long-distance reconnaissance planes of the "MDR-3" type (also modernized and equipped with six MGs and one 37-mm gun); and one was a torpedo hydroplane of the "MTB-1" type.

4. At Valona there are also several hydroplanes of Soviet and Italian make, but their types have not yet been identified.

5. The object of the base at Ligen'i Butrintit is stated to be the surveillance of the North Canal, and the patrolling and observation of Corfu(Greece).

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

CONTROL
U.S. EYES ONLY

SECRET

- 2 -

5. Anti-aircraft batteries are reported to have been installed quite recently at Ouké. There is also one battery for the defense of Valona, which is a vulnerable spot because of the gasoline tanks and the outlet of the pipe-line leading from the oil wells at Devoll. These batteries include modern automatic guns of Soviet make (40-mm Vickers L-40) and also Soviet anti-aircraft guns (76.2-mm/1288/136). The battery defending Valona has only three guns of this latter type.

CONTROL
U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY